

EVIDENCES OF CONVERSION.

J. A. RIDENOUR.

It is one thing to *profess* to be a Christian, but another and quite a different thing to *be* one. Many do the former, while but few give evidence that they are the latter. We should take no risks in this important matter, but should know for ourselves, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that we are not deceived nor deceiving others.

I am glad that this question may be easily settled, so that we and others may know whether we are the children of God or not. And since this may so easily be done, we should not rest satisfied until we have settled the question satisfactorily. Granting that this is mainly an individual matter, yet there is a sense in which it is public; and others have a right to expect and even demand the proofs that our conversion is genuine. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men that others may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Many when asked whether they are Christians, give an evasive answer. This is either because they do not know themselves, or that they realize that their lives give so little evidence that they are, that they are ashamed to answer affirmatively. I will now present some of the evidence, from the Word of God, which every true Christian may offer in support of his claim that he is a child of God—that he has been truly converted.

"There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit, 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God.' Rom. 8. 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with (not to) our spirits, that we are the children of God.' Rom 8:16. Those only who are led by the Spirit, manifest by their lives, the fruit of the Spirit; which are these: 'Love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, fidelity and self-control.' Where these are wanting it is safe to conclude that the Spirit does not lead, and therefore, can not and does not testify. But you will see in the life of the individual, who is not led by the Spirit, the following kind of fruit, viz.: 'Wrath, strife, hatred, jealousy, lying, intemper-

ence, tattling, slander, evil-speaking, evil-surmising, back-biting and persecution," proving that "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his (children.)"

God is love and love is the first fruit of the Spirit. Without love we are nothing. Love envieth not, boasteth not itself and is not puffed up. Love seeketh not (exclusively) its own, is not easily provoked, thinking no evil; but is the bond of perfectness and covereth a multitude of faults. Love never faileth. Have we this love? Do we manifest the fruit of the Spirit in our lives? If we do not, then we should not claim to be the children of God; for all know it is not true.

By *this*, said Jesus, "Shall all know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." John 13:35. And we also may "know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John 3:14. Peter exhorts that "We should love one another with a pure heart fervently." Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Even if a brother "Be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering yourselves lest ye also be tempted;" but the bigoted unchristian professor, who walks after the flesh and not after the Spirit; frequently tries to elevate himself by kicking some one else down. Such think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, for when a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing he deceiveth himself. "No man stands higher," says R. G. Ingersol, "than he who stoops over a fallen brother to lift him up." And he says the truth. If then, we want to pass as the children of God, we must in our lives manifest the fruits of the Spirit, for "By their fruit ye shall know them."

Byran, O.

A HINDOO mother, after listening hour after hour to the lady missionary as she explained the way of free salvation, exclaimed, "Tell me more." At last, when the long talk must close, the old mother drew out from under her veil the thin gray hairs, saying: "These hairs have grown white waiting for such words as these." —Miss Sparkes.

REFUSING TO DRINK WINE.

Times of special trial are likely to come to all. In every life there are decisive moments when the choice for good or evil is made for time and eternity; and upon this choice hangs our future blessing or sorrow.

It was such a moment in the lives of the four Hebrew children when in the king's palace, in the great city of Babylon, they refused to drink of the wine apportioned for them. A special honor had been conferred upon them in being chosen thus to come into the king's presence. The king had further favored them in directing that their portion of meat and drink should be served from the royal table. Some might have found in this a sufficient reason for partaking without scruple of all that was set before them. But not so with Daniel and his noble friends. They were in a strange land, and they were in bondage in the midst of an idolatrous and wicked people; but their fathers' God was still their God and they chose to obey him rather than the ungodly king. It meant, no doubt, the king's displeasure; it meant banishment from the royal palace to serve again in slavery; but they had courage to do right and, if need be, to suffer for it.

God did not permit them to suffer however, but abundantly rewarded their faithfulness and integrity.

We also have this Temperance question to decide; it may come in the form of temptation or as a matter of duty. In either case a decision is called for. On which side will you be found? Will you not come "to the help of the Lord" against this great evil which darkens so many lives with its shadow of bitter sorrow and distress? Some one may be led by your noble example to turn his back on the tempting glass; some one may take his first step on the upward and heavenward path through your influence.

How careful we should be in our judgment of others. We judge so much by external that we are very apt to place a wrong estimate upon men. If it were possible for us to see men as they really are, we would often find underneath what seems to us a cold and selfish exterior a heart warm with love.